

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 18, line 24, with the following rewritten paragraph:

---

--Figure 6(a) illustrates a simplified edge device MTP routing table according to an embodiment of the present invention. In Figure 6(a), each entry in MTP routing table 600 includes a point code field 602 and an internal link-set linkset address field 604. Point code field 602 stores point codes to be compared to destination point codes extracted from SS7 messages. Internal link-set linkset address field 604 of each message specifies the logical entity within edge device 306 to which a message should be routed. For example, if an incoming message has a point code of 1-1-1, the message is routed to the address for link-set linkset number 1 on LIM 400. Link-set Linkset number 1 on LIM 400 corresponds to fixed-bandwidth SS7 signaling link 308, which is coupled to SSP 300 illustrated in Figure 3. If the destination point code of an incoming message is 1-1-2, the message is routed to link-set linkset number 2 on LIM 400. Link-set Linkset number 2 on LIM 400 corresponds fixed-bandwidth SS7 signaling link 310, which is coupled to SSP 302. If the destination point code of an incoming message is 1-1-3, the message is routed to link-set linkset number 1 on LIM 402. Link-set Linkset number 1 on LIM 402 corresponds to fixed-bandwidth SS7 signaling link 312, which is connected to SSP 304. Thus, edge device 306 is capable of intelligently performing local routing operations without consulting an STP.--

---